



Texas Department of Transportation

Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee Quarterly Report



October 2002

International Relations Office

Introduction

The Land Transportation Standards Subcommittee (LTSS) was created under the auspices of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The primary goal of the LTSS is to examine the land transportation regulatory regimes of Mexico, Canada and the United States, and work toward their harmonization.

As directed by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 78, adopted by the 74th Legislature of the State of Texas, the following is the quarterly report on the progress of the LTSS and its related groups. This report has been prepared by the International Relations Office of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and covers the quarter ending September 30, 2002.

This report begins with a summary of general LTSS and related activities. The sections that follow include activities of each of the LTSS Working Groups and Transportation Consultative Group Working Groups (TCGs). The report concludes with a list of planned LTSS activities. Please note that some groups have completed their mandates and are therefore not listed in this report.

The information in this report was provided by the U.S. Working Group chairs and other U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) officials, as well as published reports and information obtained from Mexican officials. The initial report, issued in September 1995, contains background material that will not be repeated here. To obtain a copy of that report or others, please contact the Texas legislative library or the TxDOT International Relations Office (IRO) at (512) 374-5326. Additional information on previous LTSS-related work group activities is available at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Summary of General LTSS and Related Activities

During the quarter were ongoing negotiations with Mexico regarding the border opening. In order for that to take place, the U.S. must lift its moratorium and there must be a memorandum of understanding regarding safety issues signed by the U.S. and Mexico. Currently, there is no definitive date for either of those events to take place, though evaluations (regarding the moratorium) and negotiations (regarding the MOU) are ongoing.

Mexico and the U.S. are also discussing the possibility of Mexico participating in the International Registration Plan and the International Fuel Tax Agreement. Both interim and long term steps are being discussed and evaluated by IRP and IFTA, its member entities and the Mexican government. A U.S. meeting was held on October 1 to discuss the issues surrounding Mexico's possible participation, and a meeting with a representative from Mexico was scheduled for November 7.

Summary of LTSS Working Group Activities

Working Group 1: Driver and Vehicle Standards and Supervision of Motor Carrier Compliance

U.S. Chair: Tom Kozlowski, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Working Group 2: Vehicle Weights and Dimensions

U.S. Chair: Jim March, Federal Highway Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Working Group 5: Hazardous Materials Standards

U.S. Chair: Robert Richard, Research and Special Programs Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Summary of Transportation Consultative Group Activities

TCG Working Group 1: Cross Border Operations and Facilitation

U.S. Chair: Maria C. Lameiro, U.S. Department of Transportation

No new information was reported for the quarter.

Transportation Consultative Group 3: Automated Data Exchange

U.S. Chair: Angie Sebastian, Federal Highway Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.

TCG Working Group 4: Science and Technology

U.S. Chair: Tim Klein, U.S. Department of Transportation

No new information was reported for the quarter.

TCG Working Group 5: Maritime and Port Policy

U.S. Chair: Gregory Hall, Maritime Administration

No new information was reported for the quarter.